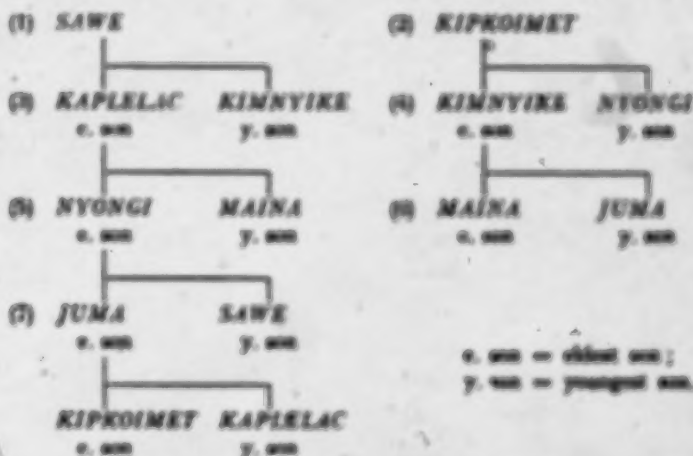


The Dorobo have borrowed this system from the Nandi, and have taken over both the Nandi names for the sets and the interval between them, which is fifteen years. There are seven sets which work in a recurring cycle of about 105 years, the names being permanent. Starting with the senior age-set, the order of names in 1939 was: *Kipkoimet*, *Kaplelac*, *Kimnyike*, *Nyongi*, *Maina*, *Juma*, *Sawe*. 561 [m]

The general rule is that a man belongs from birth to the set next but one below that of his father, so that the son of a *Sawe* will be *Kaplelac*. This applies normally to elder sons. If a man has several sons, or if there is a long interval between the birth of the eldest and the birth of the youngest, the latter normally belongs to the set next but two below that of the father, so that while the eldest son of a *Sawe* will be *Kaplelac*, the youngest will probably be *Kimnyike*, and thus of a set junior to that of his eldest brother. This is an important point, as it affects the whole system of behaviour. The following diagram illustrates descent by age-sets:



Age-sets work in the following way: the men who comprise the present *Maina* set began their circumcision period in 1923, and were circumcised at intervals during the next seven years, after which, in 1930, they became the active and responsible members of Dorobo society, and their predecessors the *Nyongi* retired from public life. At this time, in 1930, the next batch of youths, the *Juma*, moved up into the position occupied by the *Maina*, from 1923 to 1930 in order to be circumcised, becoming initiates while the *Maina* became officially 'men'. In every fifteen years or so the whole machine moves like a ratchet wheel turning one cog, and every set goes through the following periods: [m] [12] •

453 It will be seen from the map that honey-hunts and traps are the main forest activities, the shambles being outside the limit of the forest.

- [251] The Dade had developed a habit of saying that there were no honey-hunts in the forest. Certainly this would seem to be true to anyone who goes through the forest along the main track from Kipkemon, for there are not so many signs of any activity at all. But on the other track, where few but Dade go, there are plenty of them, especially in Area I where Arap and his brothers are very active, several of the hounds near the path belonging to his unmarried half-brother Kipkemon. In Area II there are not so many, because Arap Wain regards himself as an old man by now, and unable to work much (he is actually — in 1939 — about 60); his brother Arap Wain works on a farm and is less active in the forest than Kipkemon. But Arap Wain has at least two honey-hunts, which he showed me, as well as a trap in which not long before he had caught a bushbuck. A few paths branching off the main track which had once led to traps could still be distinguished, though they were not used in 1939. In Area III there was a new path leading to a trap made by Arap Nigile some way from the track. In Areas VI and VII some of the people still live in the forest in the old type of Dade hut, the *humbet*.

Now these areas are not very extensive. The space of forest occupied by Areas I-IV is perhaps not more than six square miles or thereabouts, and that of Areas V and VI may not be more than four square miles. But a mile on the map is a very different thing from a mile on the ground in an African forest. The Dade have been forced by economic pressure to concentrate, and since the adoption, even on a small scale, of agriculture, the dependence on hunting has naturally been reduced. In addition to each forest area must be reckoned the strip of open land where they live, cultivate their little shambles, and herd their few livestock. Moreover the central and unoccupied part of the forest is open to anyone who chooses to hunt there, though there were no indications in 1939 that they actually did so. In the old days the forest areas may have been larger, though when all the forest was occupied there cannot have been very much difference in size. But a relatively small area is enough for bee-keeping, trapping, and food-gathering, and it must be remembered that in the past, before the forest people's economy was disturbed, they ranged much further afield to hunt with bow and arrow than is possible today, and the forest was primarily regarded as a trapping area. Various statements leave no doubt that the Dade used to hunt right over Dade and Udele Gaba, as well as in the high country east of Tredone. Though their own territory was limited in extent, their day another was wide, and the supply of game more than adequate to their needs.*